DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 152 679 UD 018 023

AUTHOR Williams, Thomas J.
TITLE Citizens' Evaluations of Local Government Services in a Southern Community: Determinants of Support. Urban Affairs Paper No. 2.
INSTITUTION National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Jun 77
NOTE 35p.; Parts are marginally legible due to light type
AVAILABLE FROM NASPAA, Suite 300, 1225 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (n.c.)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Attitudes; *Blacks; *Caucasians; *City Government; *Community Services; Community Surveys; Evaluation; Public Education; Public Policy; *Racial Differences; Research Reviews (Publications)
IDENTIFIERS Georgia (Americus); *Municipal Services

ABSTRACT

A review of literature on citizen evaluation of municipal services indicates that whites are more likely than blacks to evaluate city services positively. Differences in socioeconomic and educational status are also discernible in relation to the degree of satisfaction with services. Citizen satisfaction with a variety of public services in Americus, Georgia, is examined in this paper. These services include police, fire, sanitation, recreation, and education. Attention is also given to the issues of citizen evaluation of city management and the perception of citizens of the relationship between services received and taxes paid. Independent variables studied include race, sex, age, length of residence in Americus, level of education, and income. Additional independent variables are feelings of political efficacy, views on the seriousness of race relations, attitudes regarding equal treatment for black citizens, and interest in politics. Although in this study race was a differentiating factor in response to a number of issues, the initial hypothesis that race would serve as the most important predictor of level of satisfaction with municipal services was not confirmed. Reasons for varying research findings are examined in relation to the field of public policy analysis. (Author/GC)

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URBAN AFFAIRS PAPER NO. 2

CITIZENS' EVALUATIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN A SOUTHERN COMMUNITY: DETERMINANTS OF SUPPORT

by

Thomas J. Williams

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION

June, 1977

UD018023

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In the last decade political scientists, along with other social scientists, have focused more and more on the study of public policy. These studies have dealt primarily with state and local governments and have explored relationships between public policy and social and economic cleavages, cultural or life-style differences, city structural characteristics, community power, and government resources and expenditures.[1] Kirlin and Erie review current models for the study of local governments and are critical because the approaches offer few clues for the study of policy impacts on citizens. The authors contend there is not enough emphasis on the results of government activity for citizens and stress the need for studies of citizens' perceptions and evaluations of governmental action and inaction.[2] Other authors have also expressed concern over the lack of information concerning citizen evaluations of public policy.[3] The critical need, according to Durand and Eckart, is for studies of factors related to citizens' feelings of satisfaction with government services.[4]

Several studies indicate that race is highly related to citizen evaluations of municipal services. One of the most important studies exploring racial differences is Campbell and Schuman's study of 15 large American cities. Their findings indicate that respondents of both races were most likely to complain about parks and recreation facilities for their children, while the highest degree of satisfaction was expressed for garbage collection. Both

races were generally satisfied with the schools. The greatest degree of differences between races concerned satisfaction with police protection and police treatment; blacks were twice as likely as whites to indicate strong dissatisfaction with police protection. In responses to a general question on neighborhood services, blacks were somewhat more likely than whites to feel that services in their neighborhood were not as good as those in other areas. Racial differences persisted even when variance in levels of income and education were controlled.[5]

Rossi and Berk also investigated the cities used in the Campbell and Schuman study and found that whites were more likely than blacks to feel the mayor was trying hard to solve major problems. They found few racial differences in feelings concerning the accessibility and responsiveness of city government, although the variation in responses between cities was greater for blacks than whites. Among blacks, expressions of dissatisfaction with municipal services, perceptions of discrimination in housing and jobs, and belief in abuse by police were all related to views on citizen accessibility to and the responsiveness of decision-makers (the authors use the term "citizen competence").[6]

Ryles examined racial differences among Atlanta residents in their attitudes toward general governmental services, the schools, the police and courts, and in their sense of political trust and efficacy. Overall, he found that respondents were generally satisfied with the quality of education. Among variables examined by Ryles, race was most strongly related to differences in evalu-

ations of services. Blacks were more likely than whites to feel that taxes were too high and that they were not getting their tax money's worth in services. In addition, more blacks than whites fe't that other neighborhoods than their own received better city services and that the police failed to provide them with adequate protection and proper treatment.[7]

The literature cited above indicates that whites are generally more likely than blacks to evaluate city services positively. Further, Ryles suggests that persons with high school educations or above positively evaluate city services; and Rossi and Berk found an association between feelings of personal efficacy, which we assume are related to feelings of political efficacy, and satisfaction with neighborhood services. Durand and Eckert predict that community satisfaction increases with the length of neighborhood residence and Marans and Rodgers note that increased age is related to satisfaction with city services. However, Marans and Rodgers also note that persons with lower incomes and levels of education are somewhat more likely to express complete satisfaction with the community.[8]

Greenberg, in a study of black and white children, found that black children were more likely to be critical of government and to reject community symbols if they felt there was unequal treatment for blacks and whites. In addition, Lineberry and Welch note the interrelationship between the level of services and blacks' perceptions of equal treatment. According to the authors,

> ....service inequalities, real or imagined, may serve to intensify the poor's disaffection toward local government. This is especially true for Negroes, for whom perceived inequalities often take on personal and symbolic significance transcending the immediate consequences of the event.[9]

The purpose of this paper is to examine citizen satisfaction with a variety of public services in the small city case of Americus, Georgia. These services include police, fire, sanitation, recreation, and education. Attention is also given the issues of citizen evaluation of city management and the perception of citizens of the relationship between services received and taxes paid. The attitudinal measures are treated as dependent variables.

Independent variables include race, sex, age, length of residence in Americus, level of education, and income. Additional independent variables include feelings of political efficacy, views on the seriousness of race relations, attitudes regarding equal treatment for black citizens, and interest in politics.[10] Although all of the independent variables may be related to satisfaction with municipal services, the expectation drawn from the literature is that racial differences among respondents will be the best predictor of differences in levels of satisfaction with governmental services in a southern community.

Methodology and Sample Characteristics

The data reported in this study are from a survey conducted in Americus, Georgia during 1973 and 1974 as part of the "Goals for Americus" project.[11] The city government was interested in citizens' evaluations of services and their perceptions regarding

future needs. Several community leaders were interviewed to determine their perceptions of city needs and problems; a survey instrument was then constructed using these responses and questions from other sources.[12]

A housing map of the city was obtained from the Superintendent of Public Works. The houses were numbered and 200--approximately five percent of the total number of houses (3,845)--were selected at random to be interviewed. A limitation of the study is that the housing map was produced in 1966. Many houses had either been built, demolished or abandoned since that time. Ideally, new houses should have been added and removed houses should have been deleted from the map before the random sample was drawn. However, available resources did not permit this. A second limitation is that apartment complexes were excluded.[13]

Interviewers were selected and trained; black interviewers were assigned to black households and white interviewers were assigned to white households. One hundred and fifty-eight interviews were collected for use in this study.[14] In the interviews, demographic data were gathered and respondents were asked to evaluate various city services, rate programs and services, suggest changes in the structure of city government, comment on race relations, and respond to items concerning political efficacy.

Table 1 gives the sample characteristics for the respondents; the percentage of blacks and whites (43.7 percent black) is very close to the percentage of blacks and whites (41.8 percent black) in the total city population (see Table 2). A higher number of

TABLE 1

Sample Characteristics by Race

(a) Total sample by race

	%	N
Percent Black	43.7	69
Percent White	56.3	89
Total % and N	100.0	158

(b) Males and females by race

	Male		Female		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	40.6	(28)	59.4	(41)	100.0	(69)
White	56.2	(50)	43.8	(39)	100.0	(89)

(c) Age of sample by race

	17-29		30-39		40-59		60-89		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	14.9	(10)	14.9	(10)	46.3	(31)	23.9	(16)	100.0	(67)
White	19.1	(17)	25.8	(23)	32.6	(29)	22.5	(20)	100.0	(89)

(d) Length of residence in Americus by race

	Less Than 10 Years		10-19 Years		20-39 Years		More Than 40 Years		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	8.7	(6)	10.1	(7)	49.3	(34)	31.9	(22)	100.0	(69)
White	30.3	(27)	13.5	(12)	37.1	(33)	19.1	(17)	100.0	(89)

(e) Level of education by race

	8th grade or less		1-4 Years High School		1-4 Years College		Post College		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	47.8	(33)	36.2	(25)	13.0	(9)	2.9	(2)	99.9	(69)
White	10.1	(9)	51.7	(46)	33.7	(30)	4.5	(4)	100.0	(89)

(f) Level of income by race

	Under 3,000		3,000 5,999		6,000 11,999		over 12,000		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	38.8	(26)	17.9	(12)	35.8	(24)	7.5	(5)	100.0	(67)
White	09.6	(8)	12.0	(10)	45.8	(38)	32.5	(27)	99.9	(83)

(g) Registered voters by race

	Yes		No		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	60.9	(42)	39.1	(27)	100.0	(69)
White	83.1	(74)	16.9	(15)	100.0	(89)

Combined black and white totals do not always equal 158 (sample size) because all respondents did not answer all questions.

TABLE 2

Population Characteristics of Americus, Georgia

Total Population	15,773	Median Family Income	$7,067
Negro Population	6,597	Percentage of Low Income Level Families	23.2%
Percent Negro	41%		
Median School Years	10.5	Median Income for Negro Families	$4,263
Median School Years:		Percentage of Negro Families with Low Income Levels	46.8%
Negro Females	7.8		
Negro Males	5.8		

Census of Population: 1970 General Social and Economic Characteristics. Final Report PC (1)-C12 Georgia (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972).

females is included in the black sample, but this is to be expected because black females are more likely than white females to be heads of the household. White respondents are more likely to be newcomers and to be young, and again, this is expected because of the influx of young whites associated with recent industrial growth in Americus. Racial differences also occur in levels of income and education, and in levels of voter registration. Levels of education and income found in the sample for both races are very similar to levels of education and income reported for the population in Table 2.

Step-wise regression analysis was used in order to determine the relationship between the independent variables and each dependent variable. Regression analysis is a partialling technique which indicates the association between a dependent variable and independent variables.[15]

The following tables include information on differences by race in evaluative municipal services (Table 3), information on the strength of the relationships among the independent variables themselves (Table 4), and between independent and dependent variables (Table 5); and data generated from step-wise regression analysis (Tables 6 through 12). The latter tables include the multiple correlation coefficients (R); F values for R; Beta coefficients (Standardized regression coefficients); and coefficients of determination (R^2).

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r) is used to measure the strength of the relationship between two interval-

level variables. Measures of association range from 1.00 to -1.00; a zero correlation indicates no relationship exists, whereas indices close to +1.00 or -1.00 indicate very strong positive or negative relationships exist between variables.[16] The multiple correlation coefficient (R) is a measure of the strength of the relationship between two or more independent variables and a dependent variable. Independent variables in Tables 6 through 12 are arranged in order of the ascending value of R; the order of their introduction into the regression equation. The differences in the coefficients of multiple determination for ascending values of R indicate how much additional variance is explained by the new independent variable. The coefficient of determination (R^2) for the correlation coefficients is the proportion of the variation in the dependent variable(s) explained by the independent variable(s) employed in the equation.[17] Beta (B) coefficients (standardized regression coefficients) permit one to compare the relative effect on the dependent variable of each independent variable; they "indicate how much change in the dependent variable is produced by a standardized change in one of the independent variables when the other independent variables are controlled."[18] The first variable entered into the regression program is the independent variable which explains the greatest amount of variance in the dependent variable; "the variable that explains the greatest amount of variance in conjunction with the first will enter second, and so on." The F value is a test of significance which indicates "whether the (assumed random) sample of observa-

tions being analyzed had been drawn from a population in which the multiple correlation is equal to zero and that any observed multiple correlation is due to sampling fluctuation or measurement error."[19]

Findings

Citizens' evaluation of services provided by the Americus city government are found in Table 3. Whites tend to be more satisfied than blacks with the type of services provided by police, fire, and sanitation departments. In addition, more whites than blacks express satisfaction when asked if they are pleased with the way the city is run. One-third of the black respondents are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way in which the city is run. Campbell and Schuman and Ryles in their studies also indicated a higher level of satisfaction with comparable city services among whites than blacks.[20]

One of the most interesting findings in the Americus study is that whites are more critical than blacks of the public schools; 30 percent of the white respondents contend that the public schools do not provide quality education for all people. Campbell and Schuman and Ryles noted emphatically in their respective studies that the public schools were one of the least complained about services and that there were few racial differences.[21] However, both Campbell and Schuman's and Ryles' studies took place prior to many of the court decisions requiring busing and eliminating racially homogeneous neighborhood schools. In addition, although the transition to integrated schools in Americus was accomplished

TABLE 3

Respondents' Evaluations of
Government Services by Race

(a) Rating of the job done by the police

	Very Good Job		Good Job		Not Such A Good Job		Not Good at All		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	15.9	(11)	53.6	(37)	26.1	(18)	4.3	(3)	99.9	(69)
White	30.3	(27)	59.6	(53)	9.0	(8)	1.1	(1)	100.0	(89)

(b) Rating of the job done by the fire department

	Very Good Job		Good Job		Not Such A Good Job		Not Good at All		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	23.5	(16)	52.9	(36)	14.7	(10)	8.8	(6)	99.9	(68)
White	44.9	(40)	53.9	(48)	1.1	(1)	0.0	(0)	99.9	(89)

(c) Do you feel the city schools provide quality education for all?

	Yes		Unsure		No		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	72.1	(49)	16.2	(11)	11.8	(8)	100.1	(68)
White	47.7	(42)	22.7	(20)	29.5	(26)	99.9	(88)

(d) Do you feel Americus needs more recreation facilities and programs?[1]

	Yes		Unsure		No		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	92.8	(64)	4.3	(3)	2.9	(2)	100.0	(69)
White	80.9	(72)	11.2	(10)	7.9	(7)	100.0	(89)

(e) Do you feel the sanitation department does an adequate job?

	Yes		Unsure		No		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	58.0	(40)	5.8	(4)	36.2	(25)	100.0	(69)
White	80.9	(72)	6.7	(6)	12.4	(11)	100.0	(89)

(f) Are you receiving your money's worth in services for taxes paid?

	Yes		Unsure		No		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	27.4	(17)	14.5	(9)	58.1	(36)	100.0	(62)
White	58.0	(51)	22.7	(20)	19.3	(17)	100.0	(88)

(g) Level of satisfaction with the way the city is run

	Very Satisfied		Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Not Satisfied		Very Dissatisfied		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Black	1.4	(1)	24.6	(17)	40.6	(28)	24.6	(17)	8.7	(6)	99.9	(69)
White	10.1	(9)	43.8	(39)	33.7	(30)	10.1	(9)	2.2	(2)	99.9	(89)

The combined total of black and white respondents does not always equal 158 (sample size) because all respondents did not answer all questions.

[1]This question does not directly measure satisfaction as do the other questions, but has been included because it does relate to a service area.

largely without incident, it did not occur until 1970 and was accompanied by a substantive movement of white students to private schools.[22]

Black respondents are more likely than white respondents to indicate that they are not getting their money's worth from their tax dollar (58.1% to 19.3%). The response percentages for both whites and blacks in this study are almost the same as those from the study in Atlanta by Ryles. Ryles argues that practices of discrimination and segregation are responsible for differences by race in attitudes toward city taxation.[23] The present findings indicate that blacks are more likely than whites, (except in the cases of recreation programs and the public schools) to feel that services are inadequate, to be dissatisfied with city management, and to feel taxation is out of proportion to services rendered.

The data in Table 3 suggest that there is a relationship between race and evaluations of government services. However, the question for this paper is whether or not race is an independent predictor of variations in evaluations of government services when other variables are introduced into the analysis. Given the literature on race and evaluations of government services, we would expect race to explain more of the variance in the dependent attitudinal variables than any other independent variable.

Table 4 indicates that a number of the independent variables are interrelated. For example, we see that being black is associated with a low level of education and income, with being a non-voter, with perceiving that blacks and whites in Americus are not

TABLE 4

Simple Correlation Matrix: Eleven Independent Variables[1,2,3]

	Race: Black/ White	Sex: Male/ Female	Age: Young/ Old	Length of Residence: Short/Long	Level of Education: Low/High	Level of Income: Low/High	Voter: Registered/Non-Registered	Political Interest: High/Low	Racial Equality: Exists/ Doesn't Exist	Racial Problems: Serious/ Not Serious	Political Efficacy: Low/High
Black/White		-.13	-.08	-.19	.40*	.33*	-.26*	.05	-.64*	.51*	.44*
Male/Female			-.43	.07	-.09	-.24*	.13	.002	.08	-.04	-.29*
Young/Old				.42*	-.35*	-.17	-.09	.02	.61	.13	-.18
Length of Residence: Short/Long					-.19	-.15	-.17	-.06	.05	-.06	-.13
Level of Education: Low/High						.37*	-.27*	-.10	-.20*	.13	.40*
Level of Income: Low/High							-.20*	.002	-.24*	.16	.46*
Voter: Registered/Non-Registered								.10	.21*	-.15	-.23*
Political Interest: High/Low									-.10	.06	-.08
Racial Equality: Exists/Doesn't Exist										-.49*	-.30*
Racial Problems: Serious/Not Serious											.38*
Political Efficacy: Low/High											

*Significant at the .05 level.

[1]See Note 10 for questions and responses on these items.

[2]Correlation matrix generated by interaction of x-axis upper case(lower case) variables with y-axis upper case (lower case) variables.

[3]A minus (-) sign indicates an inverse or negative relationship between two variables.

treated equally, with the feeling that problems of race are serious, and with a low level of political efficacy. As expected, there is a positive relationship between education and income. Also, those with low levels of income and education tend to be non-registered as voters, to believe racial equality doesn't exist in Americus, and to indicate low levels of political efficacy.[24]

The data in Table 5 illustrate the relationship between race and citizens' satisfaction with municipal services. A low but significant correlation exists between race and all municipal services except for the question on recreation programs. The negative correlations indicate that blacks are more critical than whites concerning the provision of public services except in the case of the public schools: more blacks than whites are pleased with the quality of education provided by the schools.

Additional independent variables which are related significantly with a majority of the measures of satisfaction included the respondent's level of political efficacy, views on the seriousness of race problems, and views on the state of equality for blacks and whites. Respondents feeling that blacks and whites are treated equally in Americus are more likely to evaluate positively services provided by the police, sanitation, and fire departments, to feel that services are commensurate with taxes paid, and to indicate that city administration is doing a good job. On the other hand, respondents who feel that differences between the races are a serious problem in Americus and who feel that government is not responsive to them are more likely to be critical of public

TABLE 5

Simple Correlation Matrix: The Independent Variables and Dependent Attitudinal Variables[1,2]

Dependent Variables--Citizen Attitudes Toward City Departments and Services

Independent Variables	Police Dept.	Fire Dept.	Schools	Recreation	Sanitation	Services and Taxes	City Admin.
Race: Black	-.22*	-.28*	.23*	.15	-.29*	-.21*	-.32*
Sex: Male	.02	.08	-.15	-.19	.16	.07	.002
Age: Young	-.17	-.14	-.12	.23*	-.04	-.12	-.26*
Length of Residence: Short	-.08	-.02	-.02	.08	.06	.02	-.06
Level of Education: Low	-.04	-.07	.24*	.02	-.15	-.001	-.10
Level of Income: Low	-.09	-.13	.23*	.14	-.13	-.02	-.11
Voter: Registered[3]	.08	.04	-.12	-.08	.07	.14	.20*
Political Interest: High[3]	-.11	-.09	.15	.26*	.03	-.03	-.01
Racial Equality: Exists[3]	.31*	.34*	-.02	-.15	.27*	.31*	.37*
Race Problems: Serious[3]	-.25*	-.23*	-.01	.10	-.25*	-.18	-.34*
Political Efficacy: Low[3]	-.20*	-.25*	.30*	.08	-.20*	-.21*	-.30*

*Significant at the .05 level.

[1]A minus (-) sign indicates a negative relationship between two variables.

[2]See Table 3 for questions regarding citizen attitudes.

[3]See Note 10 for questions and responses for these items.

service agencies and programs, with the exception of the public schools.

An examination of the results of step-wise regression analysis for each dependent variable reveals that in four of the seven tables, 6, 7, 8, and 9, the variable with the greatest explanatory power is the citizen's perception of the degree of equality afforded blacks in Americus. Respondents who felt that blacks and whites were treated equally were more likely to express satisfaction with services provided by the police and fire departments, to feel that city services were provided in proportion to taxes paid, and to indicate satisfaction with the way the city is run. Likewise, both blacks and whites who felt that treatment systematically differed on the basis of race were more likely to be critical of these municipal services.

TABLE 6

Variables Associated with Satisfaction with Delivery of Police Service

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.310	16.6037*	.253
Age of Respondent	.352	11.0125*	-.184
Level of Political Efficacy	.381	8.7287*	-.186
Interest in City Politics	.392	6.9521*	-.097
Sex of Respondent	.396	5.6771*	-.060
Length of Residence	.398	4.7466*	-.040

**Variables entered are those that increased R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 level.

R^2 = 15.84 percent

TABLE 7

Variables Associated with Satisfaction with Delivery of Fire Services

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.358	20.2525*	.247
Level of Political Efficacy	.374	12.6294*	-.210
Age of Respondent	.413	10.5681*	-.193
Interest in City Politics	.422	8.3344*	-.095
Sex Respondent	.427	6.8085*	-.063
Length of Residence	.430	5.7296*	-.069

**Variables entered are those that increased R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 level.

R^2= 18.49 percent.

TABLE 8

Variables Associated with Perception that Individual Receives Tax Money's Worth in Services

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.305	16.0373*	.286
Level of Political Efficacy	.328	9.3927*	-.230
Age of Respondent	.359	7.6317*	-.153
Level of Income	.375	6.2638*	.126
Length of Residence	.381	5.1719*	.099
Voter Registration	.386	4.4260*	.089
Level of Education	.392	3.9111*	.082
Views of Seriousness of Race Relations	.395	3.4498*	.055

**Variables entered are those that increased R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 Level.

R^2= 15.60 percent.

TABLE 9

Variables Associated with Satisfaction with City Management

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.366	24.2785*	.234
Age of Respondent	.451	19.8005*	-.325
Level of Political Efficacy	.517	17.7309*	-.027
Sex of Respondent	.529	14.9180*	-.115
Views of Seriousness of Race Relations	.533	12.0684*	-.062
Voter Registration	.535	10.1320*	.055
Length of Residence	.536	8.6792*	.036
Level of Income	.537	7.5779*	.044
Level of Education	.538	6.7336*	-.037
Race of Respondent	.539	6.0345*	-.034

**Variables entered are those that increased R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 level.

R^2= 29.05 percent.

The citizens' level of political efficacy has the highest degree of predictive power in terms of explaining satisfaction with the public schools (Table 10). Citizens with low levels of political efficacy are more likely to indicate that the public schools provide quality education for all. Citizens with a high level of interest in city politics are more likely to favor additional recreational programs and facilities (Table 11).

Race is the principal independent variable only in explaining the level of satisfaction with sanitation services (Table 12). Blacks are more likely than whites to feel that sanitation services are poor.

TABLE 10

Variables Associated with Satisfaction
With Public Schools

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Level of Political Efficacy	.295	14.9202*	.229
Interest in City Politics	.340	10.1400*	.194
Views on Seriousness of Race Relations	.371	8.2318*	-.166
Race of the Respondent	.407	7.6035*	.272
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.428	6.8452*	.194
Level of Education	.437	5.9734*	.092
Length of Residence	.443	5.2590*	.096
Level of Income	.449	4.7085*	.073
Sex of Respondent	.451	4.2202*	-.057
Age of Respondent	.453	3.7978*	-.040

**Variables entered are those that increased by R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 level.

R^2= 20.52 percent.

TABLE 11

Variables Associated with Perceived need
for More Recreation Programs and Facilities

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Interest in City Politics	.258	11.1753*	.254
Age of Respondent	.341	10.2490*	.241
Sex of Respondent	.386	9.0254*	-.143
Level of Income	.410	7.7327*	.100
Race of Respondent	.420	6.5386*	.063
Length of Residence	.422	5.4796*	.044
Level of Education	.424	4.7187*	.052
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.426	4.1304*	.043

**Variables entered are those that increased R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 level.

R^2= 18.15 percent.

TABLE 12

Variables Associated with Satisfaction
with Sanitation Services

Independent Variables	R**	F Value	Beta Coefficients
Race of Respondent	.285	13.8852*	-.117
Views on Seriousness of Race Relations	.312	8.4006*	-.116
Sex of Respondent	.337	6.5917*	.126
Perceive Equal Treatment for Blacks	.348	5.3006*	.134
Interest in City Politics	.353	4.3391*	.055
Level of Income	.355	3.6443*	-.080
Age of Respondent	.359	3.1849*	-.070
Voter Registration	.363	2.8334*	-.056

**Variables entered are those that increased R^2 by .001.

*F Values for R are significant at the .01 level

R^2= 13.18 percent.

The literature suggests that the respondents' race should be the most important variable in relation to levels of satisfaction with government services. However, in this study, race as an independent variable is the best explanatory variable in only one case: predicting satisfaction with Americus' sanitation department. In fact, in the cases of citizen evaluations of services provided by the police and fire department and their views regarding how the city is run and whether services are equal to tax effort, the race of the respondent is either among the worst predictor variables or does not contribute significantly to explanations of variations in citizen's evaluations.

One might argue that such principal explanatory variables

as the level of political efficacy and the respondent's views on racial equality in Americus are simply alternative measures of racial differences. And indeed, Table 4 does indicate that the variables are interrelated. However, the partialling technique used in regression analysis suggests that these and other independent variables are not simply alternative measures of race, but have an independent relationship with the dependent variables.

The order of the independent variables in Table 6 through 12 indicates their ability to contribute to explanations for changes in the dependent variables. As mentioned above, the first variable is the single most important predictor variable. The second variable is the variable which in conjunction with the first variable best explains variations in the dependent variable. Each succeeding variable entered increases the value of the multiple correlation coefficient R, which is the measure of association between the dependent variable and all independent variables; the tables include those variables which increased R^2 by .001.

In this study citizens' perceptions regarding the treatment afforded blacks in Americus are certainly the best predictors of citizens' levels of satisfaction with governmental services. Not only is it the best predictor variable in four service areas, but it adds explanatory power in the cases of the three remaining service areas.

Age is another important explanatory variable; although age never serves as the best predictor, it is associated with citizens' evaluations of all government service areas. The data suggest

that younger residents are somewhat more critical than older residents of services provided by the city government. Other independent variables which seem to have some special explanatory power include the respondents' level of political efficacy, sex, and interest in city politics. Persons with low levels of political efficacy and males tend to be critical of most city services.

Three independent variables, perceptions of equal treatment for blacks, age, and levels of political efficacy, are the best explanatory variables in this study. These variables explain most of the variance in citizens' evaluations of police and fire services, views on taxes and services, and overall satisfaction with the way the city is run.

Even though we have identified, from among the measures used in this study, the key variables which serve to explain citizens' evaluations of government services, further comment is necessary. The multiple correlation coefficients for all independent variables and the seven dependent variables are low in all cases. For example, the highest coefficient of multiple determination is found in Table 9 where R^2 equals 29.05 percent. This means that all of the independent variables combined only explain 29.25 percent of the variance in levels of satisfaction with the way the city is run. In other words, 70.75 percent of the variance in responses to the question is not explained by all independent variables combined. Obviously, the variables used in this study are weak indicators of satisfaction with municipal services in contrast to what the literature suggests. Perhaps, other variables are avail-

able which would better serve to explain citizens' evaluations of municipal services.[25]

Summary and Conclusions

In summary, our hypothesis that race would serve as the most important predictor of the level of satisfaction with municipal services cannot be accepted. Race was only the most important variable in predicting levels of satisfaction with sanitation services. In addition, race contributed some explanatory power in predicting attitudes on the quality of the public schools and the need for more recreation programs and facilities.

The respondents' views regarding the degree of equality afforded blacks in the community, their age, and their level of political efficacy were among the best predictor variables. Those who felt blacks and whites received equal treatment, who were older, and who had higher levels of political efficacy, tended to be more positive in their evaluations of city services. The exceptions are that persons having low levels of political efficacy are more likely to say that the public schools provide quality education, and that older persons and persons who feel that blacks and whites receive equal treatment are more likely to reject the need for additional recreational programs and facilities.

The literature suggests that political efficacy and age may be related to evaluations of city services.[26] However, there is little literature on citizens' perceptions of racial equality and their evaluations of municipal services. The available literature

treats the variable as an exclusively black issue, but we have seen in this study that the question of equal treatment for all races has predictive implications for whites as well.[27] Further research concerning this factor is important because the President's Commission on Civil Disorders, chaired by Otto Kerner, found that alleged inadequacies in the provision of police protection, education, recreational opportunities and assorted municipal house-keeping services were among the most serious grievances of ghetto residents in riot cities. Furthermore, the Commission noted in a reference to sanitation services, that ghetto residents view poor public service as a manifestation of racial discrimination. According to the Kerner Commission Report,

> This perception reinforces existing feelings of alienation and contributes to a heightened level of frustration and dissatisfaction, not only with the administration of the sanitation department but with all the representatives of local government.[28]

In conclusion, the findings regarding factors related to evaluations of school services, and really all municipal services, raise an important question concerning public policy analysis. Which is more important in determining levels of citizen satisfaction, actual policy or service outputs, perceptions of government responsiveness, or actual representation on policy making boards and agencies? In other words, more blacks than whites may positively evaluate the Americus public schools because there are two black school board members and because a high percentage of the teachers are black, whereas they may be negative regarding other city services because there are no black city council members or department heads. Rossi and Berk's research

indicates the importance of representation because they found that blacks felt the mayor worked harder to solve problems and saw government as more responsive in cities with black executives.[29]

Of course, another explanation for citizens' evaluations of public services is that their views represent a realistic assessment of services. For example, blacks in this study may feel that the sanitation department is not doing a good job because indeed the department is not performing well in their neighborhoods. Blacks in other studies may rate the police as doing a poor job because the police are not providing adequate services in black neighborhoods. Additional research needs to be done in the expanding areas of establishing standards of efficiency and equity in the delivery of municipal services and comparing actual delivery of services with citizens' evaluations of various municipal service areas.

NOTES

1. For examples of the literature, see Robert L. Bish and Vincent Ostrom, Understanding Urban Government (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1973); Thomas R. Dye, Politics, Economics and the Public (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1966); Brett W. Hawkins, Politics and Urban Policies (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1971); Charles O. Jones, An Introduction to the Study of Public Policy (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1970); Charles E. Lindblom, The Policy-Making Process (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968); Robert L. Lineberry and Ira Sharkansky, Urban Politics and Public Policy (New York: Harper and Row, 1971); Elinor Ostrom and others, Community Organization and the Provision of Police Services (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973); Vincent Ostrom, The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration (University, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 1973); Robert S. Ross, ed., Public Choice and Public Policy (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1971); Ira Sharkansky, Policy Analysis in Political Science (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1970); Larry L. Wade, The Elements of Public Policy (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Company, 1972); and L.L. Wade and R.L. Curry, Jr. A Logic of Public Policy (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1970).

2. John J. Kirlin and Steven P. Erie, "The Study of City Governance and Public Policy Making: A Critical Appraisal," Public Administration Review, 32 (March/April, 1972), 173-184.

3. See Bish and Ostrom, Understanding Urban Government *op. cit.*; David C. Caputo, "Evaluating Urban Public Policy: A Developmental Model and Some Reservations," Public Administration Review, 33 (March, 1973), 113-119; Donald M. Fisk and Richard E. Winnie, "Output Measurement in Urban Government: Current Status and Likely Prospects," Social Science Quarterly, 54 (March, 1974), 725-740; Robert L. Lineberry and Robert E. Welch, Jr., "Who Gets What: Measuring the Distribution of Urban Public Services," Social Science Quarterly, 54 (March, 1974), 700-712; Tim C. Ryles and John D. Hutcheson, Jr., "The Use of Surveys as Citizen Participation Mechanisms," GPSA Journal, 29 (Fall, 1974), 3-16; and Robert W. Marans and Willard Rodgers, "Toward an Understanding of Community Satisfaction," (A paper presented at the National Academy of Science Panel on Significance of Community in the Metropolitan Environment, Institute for Social Research, Univer-

sity of Michigan, December, 1972), 5-7.

4. According to Durand and Eckart,

> Despite the attention paid to the "quality of urban life," we know little about factors which promote feelings of satisfaction with a community.
>
> Few studies have systematically investigated the determinants of community satisfaction.....

Roger Durand and Dennis R. Eckart, "Social Rank, Residential Effects and Community Satisfaction," Social Forces, 52 (September, 1973), 74-85.

5. The results of the Campbell and Schuman study are found in two sources: see Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman, "Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities," in Supplemental Studies for the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, (N.Y.: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 3-67; and Angus Campbell, White Attitudes Toward Black People (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, 1971).

   The cities include Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Detroit, Gary, Milwaukee, Newark, New York (Brooklyn only), Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, St. Louis, and Washington, D. C.

6. Rossi and Berk utilize data collected by the Survey Research Center for the Kerner Commission and reported in the Campbell and Schuman, and Campbell publications cited in Note 6. However, Rossi and Berk collected additional data in their 15 city survey of community elites and institutional agents. Peter H. Rossi and Richard A. Berk, "Local Roots of Black Alienation," Social Science Quarterly, 54 (March, 1974), 741-758.

7. Tim C. Ryles, "Citizens' Supports for Urban Policies and Political Authorities," (A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Georgia Political Science Association, Macon, Georgia, February 6, 1971). For an additional study on community satisfaction in a Georgia community see Harold L. Nix and Norma R. Seerley, Community Social Analysis of Dekalb County, Georgia (Athens, Georgia: Institute of Community and Area Development, University of Georgia, 1972). For a study concerning a state-wide survey of citizens' views on policy, see Tim C. Ryles, Citizen's Perspectives on Goals for Georgia (Atlanta: Community Life Publications, School of Urban Life, Georgia State University, 1974).

8. Ryles, "Citizens' Supports for Urban Policies and Political Authorities," *op. cit.*, 12-15; Rossi and Berk, "Local Roots of Black Alienation," *op. cit.*, 755-758; Durand and Eckart,

"Social Rank, Residential Effects and Community Satisfaction," *op. cit.*, 82; and Marans and Rodgers, "Toward an Understanding of Community Satisfaction," *op. cit.*, 34-50.

9. Edward S. Greenberg, "Black Children and the Political System," Public Opinion Quarterly, 34 (Fall, 1970), 343; Edward S. Greenberg, "Children and the Political Community, A Comparison Across Racial Lines," The Canadian Journal of Political Science, 2 (December, 1969), 487; and Lineberry and Welch, "Who Gets What: Measuring the Distribution of Urban Public Services," *op. cit.*, 702.

10. In addition to the independent variables shown in Table 1, the following survey items were included as independent variables: (a) the political efficacy items were the five items developed by the Survey Research Center which have become standard measures of political efficacy. They include the statements, "What happens in government will happen no matter what people do," "There are some big powerful men in government who are running the whole thing and they do not care about us ordinary people," "My family doesn't have any say about what the government does," "I don't think people in government care much about what people like my family think," and "Citizens don't have a chance to say what they think about running the government." The items were not scaled, but values 1-5 were assigned to the responses "strongly agrees," "agree," "unsure," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Sums for the five items were obtained for each respondent; a low score equals a low level of political efficacy. (b) The question on race relations was, "How serious is the problem of relations between blacks and whites in Americus?" 1. Very serious. 2. Serious, 3. Not too serious, 4. Not serious at all. (c) The question on equal treatment was, "Do you think black citizens in Americus are treated equally with white citizens?" 1. Yes, 2. Unsure, 3. No. (d) There were two items on political interest: "Are you a registered voter?" 1. Yes, 2. No; and, "How interested would you say you are in city problems and city politics?" 1. Very interested, 2. Fairly interested, 3. Not too interested, 4.. Not interested at all.

11. See Kember Smith, Final Report Goals for Americus Project (Americus, Ga.: Georgia Intern Program, 1974); and Thomas J. Williams, "Racial Differences in Levels of Satisfaction with a Local Government in a Southern State," (Presented at the 1974 Annual Meeting of the Georgia Political Science Association, Athens, Georgia). Mr. Smith was a political science intern with the Georgia Intern Program assigned to the mayor's office.

    Americus, Georgia has been a well-publicized, southern community; for example, see Marshall Frady, "Discovering One Another in a Georgia Town," Life, 70 (February 12, 1974),

46-52; Leon Friedman, ed., Southern Justice (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1967), 148-154; 191-192; and, Dallas Lee, The Cotton Patch Evidence: The Story of Clarence Jordan and the Koinonia Farm Experience, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971). For a discussion of changes in Americus and the impact of private schools see Frady, "Discovering One Another in a Georgia Town," *op. cit.*; Will Leventhal, "A Personal Odyssey," New South (Fall, 1972), 73-80; Cynthia Brown and Marlene Provizer, "The South's New Dual School System: A Case Study," New South (Fall, 1972), 69-72; and Kitty Terjen, "Close-Up on Segregation Academies," New South (Fall, 1973), 50-58.

12. Community leaders interviewed included the Mayor, Fire Chief, Police Chief, City Attorney, City Recorder, General Superintendent and Purchasing Officer (Serves as City Administrator), Superintendent of Schools, City Engineer, Director of Housing Authority, Director of Urban Renewal, Chamber of Commerce President, Chamber of Commerce Manager, several members of the Board of Aldermen, and several college faculty members.

    Questions were gathered from several sources including questionnaires used by Tim C. Ryles in the "Goals for Georgia" study and the study of a metropolitan community reported in Ryles, "Citizens supports for Urban Policies and Political Authorities," *op. cit.*; James Q. Wilson and Edward C. Banfield, "Public Regardingness as a Value Premise in Voting Behavior," American Political Science Review, 58 (December, 1964), 875-887; and Charles R. Adrian and Charles Press, Governing Urban America (4th ed; N.Y.: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972). A number of questions were developed by the author of this paper.

13. Random selection of houses was accomplished through use of the random number generator written for the IBM 1130 computing system.

    Approximately one hundred new housing units were excluded; these were primarily white households. Vacant, abandoned, and removed houses were primarily in black sections of the community.

14. Interviewers of the same race as respondents were used to elicit more open responses from respondents of both races who might have felt threatened by interviewers of the opposite race.

15. Independent variables included in the tables are those which increased R^2 by an amount greater than .001. For an explanation and examples of the use of multiple regression analysis see Dennis J. Palumbo, Statistics in Political and Behavioral Science (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), 216; Thomas J. Keil and Charles A. Ekstrom, "Municipal Differ-

entiation and Public Policy: Fiscal Support Levels in Varying Environments," Social Forces, 52 (March, 1974), 384-395; and, Harrell R. Rodgers, Jr. and George Taylor, "The Policeman as an Agent of Regime Legitimation," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 15 (February, 1970), 76-77. Also see Hubert M. Blalock, Jr., Social Statistics (2nd ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972), 429-470; and Norman H. Nie and others, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (2nd ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975) 320-367.

The program used was the IBM 1130 Step-Wise Multiple Regression Program.

16. The data do not fit at all the conditions required for the use of the Pearson coefficient. For example, race and sex are nominal-level measures and most of the other independent and dependent variables are ordinal-level measures. The Pearson coefficient calls for interval-level data. However, Nie and others indicate that several social scientists argue for the use of ordinal data in computing the Pearson coefficient. For discussions regarding the Pearson coefficients and nominal, ordinal, and interval data see Nie and others, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, *op. cit.*, 276 and 278; Kenneth J. Downey, Elementary Social Statistics (New York: Random House, 1975), 214-219; and Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964), 89-90, 422-425.

17. Nie and others, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, *op. cit.*, 278-280, 324, 330-331; and, Blalock, Social Statistics, *op. cit.*, 376, 454.

18. Blalock, Social Statistics, *op. cit.*,453. Also see Downey, Elementary Social Statistics, *op. cit.*,214; and Rogers and Taylor, "The Policeman as an Agent of Regime Legitimation," *op. cit.*, 77.

19. Nie and others, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, *op. cit.*, 335 and 345. Also see Helen M. Walker and Joseph Lev, Statistical Inference (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1953), 251.

20. Campbell and Schuman, "Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities," *op. cit.*, 39-43; and Ryles, "Citizens' Supports for Urban Policies and Political Authorities," *op. cit.*, 10-21. Campbell and Schuman also note high satisfaction among whites and blacks with sanitation services; this finding is not supported in the present study. The ready conclusion is that sanitation services delivered to blacks in Americus may indeed be systematically inferior to those provided whites.

21. Campbell and Schuman, "Racial Attitudes in Fifteen American Cities," *op. cit.*, 39-43; and Ryles, "Citizens' Supports for Urban Policies and Political Authorities," *op. cit.*, 10.

22. During the period 1973 to 1974, two of the six school board members were black (board members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council); three of the six principals were black, and between 42-45 percent of the teachers were black. Approximately 38 percent of the 3,305 pupils in the public schools were white (figures were provided by the superintendent of schools and were for September, 1973).

23. Ryles, "Citizens' Supports for Urban Policies and Political Authorities," *op. cit.*, 10-15.

24. See Note 16 for comment regarding requirements for use of the Pearson coefficient and the use of nominal and ordinal-level data in this study.

25. The variables include almost all of the measures normally used in survey research. The exception is property ownership and this was an oversight on the part of the author.

26. See Joel D. Aberback, "Alienation and Political Behavior," American Political Science Review, 63 (March, 1969), 86-99. For a discussion of age and political trust among blacks, see David O. Sears, "Black Attitudes Toward the Political System in the Aftermath of the Watts Insurrection," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 4 (November, 1969), 515-544. Also see, Marans and Rodgers, "Toward an Understanding of Community Satisfaction," *op. cit.*, 34-40. See also the other citations in Notes 8 and 9.

27. See Note 9, references to Greenberg and Lineberry, and Note 26, reference to Sears; and Peter H. Rossi, Richard A. Berk and Bettye K. Edison, The Roots of Urban Discontent, Public Policy, Municipal Institutions and the Ghetto (N.Y.: John Wiley & Sons, 1974), 390-408.

28. Report on the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968), 81-83, 148, cited in, Lineberry and Welch, "Measuring the Distribution of Urban Public Services," *op. cit.*, 702.

29. Rossi and Berk, "Local Roots of Black Alienation," *op. cit.*, 741-758. Also see Rossi, Berk, and Edison, The Roots of Urban Discontent, Public Policy, Municipal Institutions and the Ghetto, *op. cit.*, 390-408.